pons is regarded as inhuman and reprehensible by the entire world community and is prohibited by international law. The use of nuclear weapons can unleash death and devastation beyond the theatre of war, affecting both combatants and non-combatants alike. It constitutes a threat to the very survival of mankind. The use of nuclear weapons has been regarded by the United Nations General Assembly as a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. Moreover, the Security Council, while prescribing the use of "necessary means" in its Resolution No. 678, could not have conceived including nuclear weapons as falling within these means. The Government of India calls upon all parties engaged in the Gulf conflict strictly to abjure the use of nuclear or chemical weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction.

Sri Lankan Defence Minister's warning to civilian population

420. DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sri Lanka's Minister of Defence has warned the civilian population of Jaffna to quit, as aerial bombing will continue;

(b) whether this will increase the influx of refugees into India; and

(c) whether Government propose to take up this problem with Government of Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) Government have seen press reports that the Sri Lankan Minister of Defence had said that if the people of Jaffna wanted security, then they should keep away from the war zone.

(b) and (c) During former External Affairs Minister's recent visit to Colombo, the need to find a political solution to the ethnic issue had been reaffirmed. Government also expressed distress at reports of civilian casualties and damage to property due to continuing aerial attacks in North Sri Lanka and concern that the escalation of hostilities could renew the refugee influx and adversely affect the process towards a negotiated political settlement, with the participation of all concerned parties.

Refuelling of US Airforce planes at Indian Airports

421. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN:
SHRI M. A. BABY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted at Indian Airports the refuelling of U.S. Airforce planes which are involved in Gulf war;

(b) the number of U.S. Airforce planes which have till now been allowed refuelling and what is the total amount of aviation fuel spent for the purpose; and

(c) when the order for refuelling of these planes was issued alongwith the terms and conditions thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) Government had given transit and refuelling facilities to US Air Force transport aircraft at Indian airports. These facilities were given on a clear assurance from the US Government that these flights would be used solely for transporting non-lethal supplies and for evacuation of personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency considerations.

(b) Since the Gulf crisis, 136 US air force transport aircraft have availed of transit and refuelling facility. During the months of January and February approximately 32 lakh litres of fuel has been provided.

(c) In the present context, the permission for refuelling was granted on 28th December, 1990, on the basis of an assurance that the flights would be used solely for transporting non-lethal supplies and for evacuation of personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency grounds.